

Indiana's Priorities for Early Literacy: Science of Reading Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

<u>Indiana's Priorities for Early Literacy</u> include a timeline to implement early literacy instructional coaches who will use evidence-based practices aligned with the Science of Reading to support literacy progress within their schools. These FAQs serve to provide context for the Science of Reading as the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) prepares instructional coaches to instill this body of research.

Number	Question	Answer
1	What process was used to identify the high-need schools that were invited to partner with IDOE in integrating the Science of Reading?	Primary selection criteria included: School demographics; Free/reduced lunch eligibility; Special education population; English learner population; Pre-COVID-19 pandemic scores on IREAD-3 and ILEARN English/Language Arts; IREAD-3 retest and Good Cause Exemption data; and School location, to ensure regional representation statewide.
2	How will instructional coaches be selected and trained for this partnership?	During year one, IDOE will recruit schools to opt-in to the program, including those identified as high-need. Schools will then identify candidates to serve as instructional coaches, and IDOE will assist in vetting these candidates. Procured vendors will provide training, ongoing support, and program evaluation for these coaches. All coach applicants must hold a valid Indiana teaching license, have at least five years of teaching experience in grades K-2, and have demonstrated expertise in reading. Selected year-one coaches will participate in an initial week-long training in July 2022. Coaches, in addition to administrators and pre-service providers, will continue to receive regular professional development through year two of the program.
3	How can schools partner with IDOE to implement literacy practices aligned with the Science of Reading?	Schools wishing to opt in to this voluntary coalition should review the implementation details related to Indiana's Priorities for Early Literacy and submit the Jot Form application by 5 p.m. ET Friday, April 8. IDOE will follow up with interested schools to confirm participation status by Monday, April 11.
4	How will practices aligned with the Science of Reading integrate with other content areas?	Students will be able to apply reading skills acquired from intentional, systematic phonics and language instruction to reading tasks in other content areas.
5	When discussing the Science of Reading research, how is literacy acquired at birth?	Cognitive processes in children develop rapidly in the first several years, which leads to stronger literacy development for infants who are exposed to specific language and experiences early on. Language exposure and understanding allows children to begin comprehending written language.

6	Can schools supplement the literacy curriculum they are already using?	The Science of Reading is designed to be the basis for schools' primary literacy curriculum, not a supplement to other literacy lessons. Its success depends on following an explicit, sequential, systematic, prescriptive, diagnostic, and cumulative model (International Dyslexia Association).
7	Which Response to Intervention (RTI) programs incorporate the Science of Reading?	Science of Reading instruction is beneficial for all children learning to read. It is particularly helpful to those who lack phonemic awareness, such as students with dyslexia. RTI programs can use strategies aligned with the Science of Reading framework in tiered groups, providing more frequent interventions for students who require additional support to master word decoding and increase language and reading comprehension.
8	How can phonics instruction motivate students to learn and want to read both in and out of the classroom?	Phonics instruction teaches students the sounds represented by letters so that they can decode words. Students who know how to decode words can access text and improve their oral reading fluency, making reading an easier task.

For additional information, please contact IDOE's Office of Teaching and Learning.